

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace paragraph [0060] with the following paragraph as amended:

[0060] A first ~~wafer~~ one of the wafers 62 is loaded into the first loadlock chamber 60a in which a low-vacuum state of about 10^{-3} Torr is maintained, using the substrate transferring robot 56 disposed within the substrate transfer chamber 54. Then, the wafer 62 in the first loadlock chamber 60a is transferred to a respective one of the processing chambers 66a, 66b and 66c by the transferring robot 64 disposed within the transfer chamber 63. A high vacuum pressure of about 10^{-6} Torr is maintained in all the processing chambers 66a, 66b and 66c.

Please replace paragraph [0065] with the following paragraph as amended:

[0065] Once the first wafer 62 is dry etched, the wafer is transferred to the second loadlock chamber 60b using the transferring robot 64. After that, the first wafer 62 is transferred to a FOUP 52 disposed on the second load port 58b using the substrate transferring robot 56. The wafer remains there in the FOUP 52 for about 50 minutes until the remaining wafers are processed. When all ~~the wafers~~ of the other wafers are processed and received in the FOUP 52, the front door of the FOUP 52 is closed and the FOUP 52 is removed from the dry etching apparatus.

Please replace paragraph [0185] with the following paragraph as amended:

[0185] The gas circulating tube 138 ~~is~~ extends at one side of the substrate transfer chamber 110 between a lower portion and an uppermost portion of the substrate

transfer chamber 110 such that the purging gas recycled back into the substrate transfer chamber 110 through the gas circulating tube 138 forms a laminar flow within the substrate transfer chamber 110. Also, the gas circulating tube 138 is connected to the fan filter unit 120 so that the purging gas is filtered before it is circulated back into the substrate transfer chamber 110.

Please replace paragraph [0190] with the following paragraph as amended:

[0190] Now, when the ambient within the substrate transfer chamber 110 ~~are~~ is purged by the purging gas, the process would consume a large amount of purging gas and pose problems relating to the exhausting of the purging gas. Therefore, it is preferred that only a portion of the total volume of the ambient in the substrate transfer chamber 110 be purged utilizing the purging gas, and that the purging gas recycled back into the substrate transfer chamber 110 be exhausted through a natural leakage of the purging. In FIG. 6, reference numeral 146a designates the purging gas supplied to the substrate transferring chamber 110 through the gas supply inlet 132, reference numeral 146b designates the purging gas provided back into the substrate transfer chamber 110 through the gas circulating tube 138, and reference numeral 146c designates the purging gas that leaks out naturally from the substrate transferring chamber 110 due to its own pressure.

Please replace paragraph [0215] with the following paragraph as amended:

[0215] The gate valve 152a between the substrate transfer chamber 110 and the first loadlock chamber 122a is then closed and a gate valve 154a between the transfer chamber 124 of the substrate processing section 102 and the first loadlock chamber 122a is opened. Then, the first wafer is transferred into the transfer chamber 124 by the transferring robot 126 disposed within the transfer chamber 124. Next, a gate valve 156a, 156b or 156c between the transfer chamber 124 and a respective processing chamber 128a, 128b and 128c is opened. Then, the first wafer is transferred to the ~~proeessing~~ respective processing chamber 128a, 128b and 128c by the transferring robot 126. At this time, the processing chambers 128a, 128b and 128c are maintained at a high-vacuum state of about 10^{-6} Torr.

Please replace paragraph [0235] with the following paragraph as amended:

[0235] Next, the gate valve 154b between the transfer chamber 124 and the second loadlock chamber 122a is closed, and the gate valve 152b between the substrate transfer chamber 110 and the second loadlock chamber 122b is opened. Then, the first wafer is transferred into the substrate transfer chamber 110 by the substrate transferring apparatus 114. Subsequently, the substrate transferring apparatus 114 is transfers the first wafer from the substrate transfer chamber 110 into the FOUP 106 on the second load port 112b. The first wafer stands ready in the FOUP 106 for about 50 minutes until the remaining wafers are processed and transferred into the FOUP 106. However, the interior of the substrate transfer chamber 110

connected to the FOUP 106 is continuously purged by nitrogen gas during this time so that moisture and contaminants are removed from the substrate transfer chamber 110. Therefore, the purging process prevents the first wafer from absorbing humidity and other potential contaminants. The front door of the FOUP is closed and ~~the~~ then no more purging gas is supplied into the substrate transferring chamber 110 once all the processed wafers are received in the FOUP 106. Then, the FOUP 106 is removed from the dry etching apparatus.